

REMARKS

Claims 217-218, 220-221, 223-235, 237-238, and 240-241 are pending in the application. The amendments to the claims were made to further clarify the presently claimed invention. No new matter has been inserted into the application.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

Claim 233 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicant traverses this rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested. However, the amended claim 233 is believed to be definite. Accordingly, this rejection is overcome.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) Over Mercolino '036 (USP 5,369,036)

Claims 217, 218 and 233-235 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Mercolino '036. Applicant traverses this rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested.

The Office did not reject claims 219 and 236, among other claims, over the Mercolino '036 reference as relied on. In the interest of furthering prosecution toward an allowance, Applicant has amended independent claims 217 and 233 with the language of claims 219 and 236, respectively. Accordingly, amended claims 217 and 233 (as well as claims dependent therefrom) should be patentable in view of the cited references.

In view thereof, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) Over Sigal ‘670 (US 6,319,670)

Claim 217 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Sigal ‘670. Applicant traverses this rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested.

The Office did not reject claims 219 and 236, among other claims, over the Sigal ‘670 reference as relied on. In the interest of furthering prosecution toward an allowance, Applicant has amended independent claims 217 and 233 with the language of claims 219 and 236, respectively. Accordingly, amended claims 217 and 233 (as well as claims dependent therefrom) should be patentable in view of the cited references.

In view thereof, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) Over Bamdad ‘617 (US 6,541,617)

Claims 217, 218, 222, 223, 225-227, 230, 231, 233-235, 239 and 240 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Bamdad ‘617. Applicant traverses this rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested.

The Office did not reject claims 219 and 236, among other claims, over the Bamdad ‘617 reference as relied on. In the interest of furthering prosecution toward an allowance, Applicant has amended independent claims 217 and 233 with the language of claims 219 and 236, respectively. Accordingly, amended claims 217 and 233 (as well as claims dependent therefrom) should be patentable in view of the cited references.

In view thereof, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) Over Oberhardt ‘615 (US 6,251,615)

Claims 217 and 221 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Oberhardt ‘615. Applicant traverses this rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested.

The Office did not reject claims 219 and 236, among other claims, over the Oberhardt ‘615 reference as relied on. In the interest of furthering prosecution toward an allowance, Applicant has amended independent claims 217 and 233 with the language of claims 219 and 236, respectively. Accordingly, amended claims 217 and 233 (as well as claims dependent therefrom) should be patentable in view of the cited references.

In view thereof, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) Over Bamdad ‘617 in view of Charych ‘556 (US 6,001,556)

Claim 219, 228, 236 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being “obvious” over Bamdad ‘617 in view of Charych ‘556. Applicant traverses this rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested.

The Office did not reject claims 222, 225, and 239, among other claims, over the Bamdad ‘617 and Charych ‘556 references as relied on. In the interest of furthering prosecution toward an allowance, Applicant has amended independent claims 217 and 233 with the language of claims 222 and 239, respectively, which overcome the rejections of claims 219 and 236. However, with respect to the rejection of claim 228, which depends from claim 225, which is an allowable claim, it is inconsistent that an independent claim is in allowable condition but a dependent claim

that depends from the allowable claim is rejected under prior art. Accordingly, all of the claims should be patentable in view of the cited references.

In view thereof, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) Over Bamdad ‘617 in view of Altieri ‘389 (US 6,346,389)

Claims 220, 229, and 237 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being “obvious” over Bamdad ‘617 in view of Altieri ‘389. Applicant traverses this rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested.

The Office did not reject claims 219 and 236, among other claims, over the Bamdad ‘617 and Altieri ‘389 references as relied on. In the interest of furthering prosecution toward an allowance, Applicant has amended independent claims 217 and 233 with the language of claims 219 and 236, respectively. Accordingly, amended claims 217 and 233 (as well as claims dependent therefrom) should be patentable in view of the cited references.

In view thereof, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) Over Bamdad ‘617 in view of Zeytinoglu ‘539 (US 6,080,539)

Claims 221 and 238 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being “obvious” over Bamdad ‘617 in view of Zeytinoglu ‘539. Applicant traverses this rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested.

The Office did not reject claims 219 and 236, among other claims, over the Bamdad ‘617 and Zeytinoglu ‘539 references as relied on. In the interest of furthering prosecution toward an

allowance, Applicant has amended independent claims 217 and 233 with the language of claims 219 and 236, respectively. Accordingly, amended claims 217 and 233 (as well as claims dependent therefrom) should be patentable in view of the cited references.

In view thereof, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) Over Bamdad '617 in view of Virtanen '349 (US 6,342,349)

Claims 224, 232 and 241 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being obvious over Bamdad '617 in view of Virtanen '349. Applicant traverses this rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested.

The Office did not reject claims 219 and 236, among other claims, over the Bamdad '617 and Virtanen '349 references as relied on. In the interest of furthering prosecution toward an allowance, Applicant has amended independent claims 217 and 233 with the language of claims 219 and 236, respectively. Accordingly, amended claims 217 and 233 (as well as claims dependent therefrom) should be patentable in view of the cited references.

In view thereof, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are requested.

Conclusion

It is believed that the application is now in condition for allowance. Applicants request the Examiner to issue a notice of Allowance in due course. The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned to further the prosecution of the present invention.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge JHK Law's Deposit Account No. **502486** for any fees required under 37 CFR § 1.16 and 1.17 and to credit any overpayment to said Deposit Account No. **502486**.

Respectfully submitted,

JHK Law

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